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Control 5543

Rec'd February 15, 1949
11:09 a.m.

FROM: Moscow

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 358, February 15, 3 p.m.

X0030

FILE

OFFICE OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS
MESSAGE CENTER

URGENT

Arrest Anna Louise Strong at first glance surprising in view her long record as militant pro-Soviet writer. However, Embassy believes arrest has significant implications; our interpretation follows:

(1) Strong's mood and point of view re USSR have undergone considerable change; in recent weeks she has been increasingly critical of Soviets in conversations and obviously annoyed at delay in receiving exit permit via Vladivostok to return China (Embassy's A-46 January 17).

(2) Strong has indicated to Embassy officers it increasingly difficult continue personal relations with numerous Russians she knows here. She acknowledged no longer possible foreign correspondents operate here and said she was planning send out her belongings preparatory permanent departure from Soviet Union.

(3) Strong's line on China has been that Soviets do not control Mao, that in fact their information on Chinese Communists is poor (she cited recent Soviet press article on Chinese military situation as completely inaccurate, failing appreciate actual situation) and that they surprised rapid CCP victories and apprehensive CCP becoming too powerful. She has expressed opinion Mao, while supporting Soviet

line,

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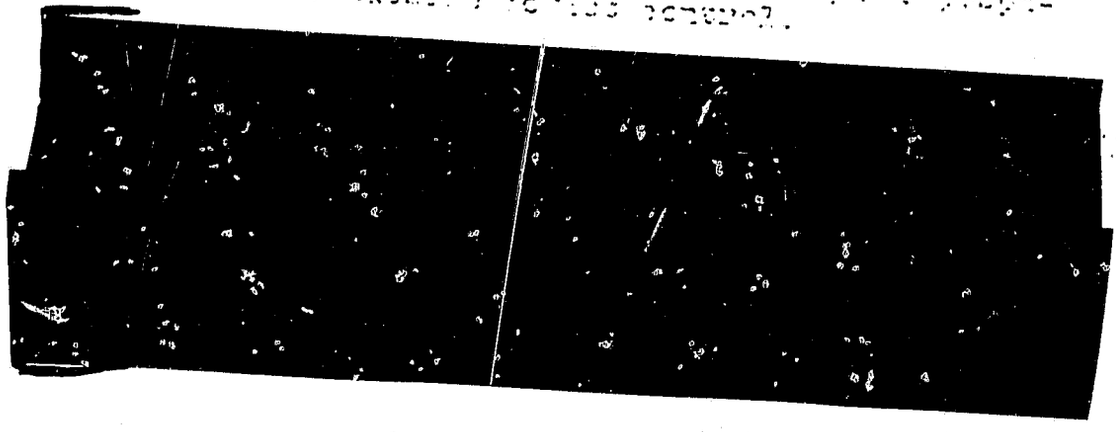
-2- 350, February 15, 3 p.m. from Moscow.

line, probably independent Soviet direction and
"pull a fast"

(4) Embassy believes likely Soviets do not approve Strong's present line and particularly do not want her return China. Public condemnation as American spy will make it impossible for Chinese Commies admit her and at same time render her persona non grata satellites where she said have considerable following (who was official delegate recent Budapest International Congress Women and her book on China is being published beyond satellite countries). Soviets apparently decided her possible future anti-Soviet writing less harmful than her activities here, China and satellites, given her present state of mind.

(5) Embassy does not believe Strong's arrest is connected with recent discontinuance HOSCOW NEWS on which she was founder, since this innocuous publication apparently outlived its usefulness and Embassy knows of no taint put upon it or its editor Borodin, former associate Strong whom she still saw frequently here.

(6) Finally, Embassy cannot fail point out that [illegible] Soviet interpretation [illegible]



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-3- 869, February 3, 7 p.m. from Tokyo.

Embassy has learned in personal talk with Foreign Office official that Japanese Government [illegible] United States (Department 351, January 28) [illegible] official communication and in such form [illegible] Litvinov agreement, in substance as Japanese [illegible] would be.

Sent Department 351, repeated Moscow 35.

GREW

WSB:CD